



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

March 25, 1999

H.R. 39 **Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act**

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on March 17, 1999

SUMMARY

H.R. 39 would direct the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to create a new grant program for projects to conserve neotropical migratory birds in the United States and Caribbean and Latin American countries. The program would provide financial assistance to eligible government agencies, international or foreign organizations, and private entities. H.R. 39 would authorize the USFWS to create a 7-member advisory group in order to assist the agency in carrying out these activities. In order to provide financing for the new program, the bill would establish a neotropical migratory bird conservation account in the U.S. Treasury, into which the Secretary of the Treasury would deposit amounts donated to the government for this program as well as amounts appropriated by the Congress.

For the purposes of developing and administering the program and making grants, H.R. 39 would authorize the appropriation of \$8 million annually for fiscal years 2000 through 2002. Because the bill would authorize the USFWS to accept and spend donations without further appropriation, pay-as-you-go procedures would apply. CBO estimates, however, that any new revenues and resulting direct spending would be insignificant and largely offsetting. The bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA). State and local governments might incur some costs as a result of the bill's enactment, but these costs would be voluntary.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 39 would cost the federal government \$24 million through 2004. For purposes of this estimate, CBO assumes that the bill will be enacted by the beginning of fiscal year 2000 and that the entire amount authorized will be appropriated for each year. Outlay estimates are based on spending patterns for similar programs. The costs of this legislation fall within

budget function 300 (natural resources and environment). The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 39 is shown in the following table.

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars				
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION					
Authorization Level	8	8	8	0	0
Estimated Outlays	3	6	8	5	2

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS

The Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act sets up pay-as-you-go procedures for legislation affecting direct spending or receipts. H.R. 39 would affect both offsetting receipts (a credit against direct spending) and governmental receipts. CBO estimates, however, that any such effects would be insignificant and offsetting over the next five years.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

H.R. 39 contains no intergovernmental mandates as defined in UMRA and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. State and local governments would be among the entities eligible to receive the financial assistance authorized by this bill. In order to receive assistance for a project, these governments would be required to submit a proposal meeting certain criteria and to pay at least 67 percent of the project costs. Any such costs incurred by state or local governments would be voluntary.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON THE PRIVATE SECTOR

This bill would impose no new private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA.

PREVIOUS CBO ESTIMATE

On March 19, 1999, CBO prepared a cost estimate for S. 148, the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Environment and

Public Works on March 17, 1999. S. 148 would authorize appropriations for one more year (fiscal year 2003) than H.R. 39. The estimate for H.R. 39 reflects the different authorization period.

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